Upcoming Events

Through April 11 — Winter Famer’s Market (Saturday mornings)*
Through March 19 — Music Under Glass (Thursday evenings)*
Through March 15 — 2015: A Space Odyssey (Train Show)
March 7 — Ireland Under Glass Festival
March 22 — Dare to Be Aware Fair
March 28—May 25 — That’s Amore (Spring Floral Show)
March 29 — Very Fairy Princess Day
April 18 — German Under Glass Festival
May 2 — Jewelry at the Domes Gift Show
May 10 — Mother’s Day Jewelry is Fun Show and Sale
June 15—19 — Pollinator Week

*Now held in the Greenhouse (southeast of the Domes main entrance)
**Thursday nights, 6:30—9:00 PM

Inside the Domes

Celebrate the Sparkle of a Very Fairy Princess Day!

By Mary Braun
Horticulturist

Last year’s Very Fairy Princess Day was so popular that we have decided to make it an annual event! Bring your favorite little princesses, knights, or jesters to the Domes on Sunday, March 29 for the celebration.

Free activities and entertainment include face painting, storytelling, dance lessons, crafty art projects, live music, and the opportunity to play games with a wizard and win prizes. Children can also participate in a parade!

The party isn’t limited to royal princesses and princes—wizards, pirates, and all of your little characters are welcome to join the fun! Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Wednesday: Sunday, March 29, 2015 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Cost: Free to Friends Members; Regular Domes admission prices for non-members

Experience Germany Under Glass—March 7

German Under Glass brings the culture, flavor, and sound of Germany to the Domes. In addition to music, dance, authentic foods, and table-top displays, this popular festival will celebrate three special historical events. Speakers will present on the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the centennial anniversary of the start of World War I, and Germany’s winning of the 2014 World Cup.

To provide a deeper understanding of German history and culture, visitors can take in a variety of talks in the Education Center. From cooking and brewing talks to more serious discussions, the 30-minute programs will enlighten visitors.

Music and dance performances will be ongoing in both the lobby and Show Dome. Local Milwaukee businesses passionate about their German heritage will serve authentic German foods.

There will also be crafts and activities for children. German goods will be sold, including t-shirts, ornaments, and handcrafted iron work.

When: Saturday, March 7, 2015 from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Cost: Free to Friends Members; Regular Domes admission prices for non-members
Be Part of the Solution

By Paula Zarnotzki
Interpretive Educator

Many of us are concerned about the serious problems our environment faces and the impact these problems will have on all living creatures. Green Living Festival provides opportunities to learn about ways we can actually help the environment and make positive changes. The eighth annual Green Living Festival is a celebration of sustainability and healthy living strategies. It will bring a fashion show, live demonstrations, talks, and activities for the kids to the Domes on Saturday, April 18, from 9 A.M.–3 P.M.

In recognition of the United Nations’ “International Year of Soil,” the festival will feature several activities to inform visitors about how to turn tired backyard soil into rich, healthy black gold. When we have healthy soils, we have a healthy planet.

The “fashion experience” is more than a typical fashion show. From noon to 1 P.M., models will walk through the crowd providing visitors an up-close look at the fiber art of Timothy Westbrook. Timothy is a fiber artist who weaves organic and repurposed materials into fashions using a trouble sewing machine without electricity.

Throughout the day, activities for kids will include:
- Making paper embedded with seeds for one-of-a-kind Mother’s Day cards
- Scavenger hunts
- Bracelet making
- Making souvenirs Green Living Festival buttons.
- And other outdoor activities

Adults and children will think about sustainability in new ways after seeing grass-trimming goats grazing on the lawn; demonstrations of honey bee hives; and bicycle maintenance. Recycling games will help participants sort out Milwaukee’s recycling regulations. Coinciding with the Green Living Festival is Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful’s “Community Kick-off Day” of the Great American Cleanup™ from 9 A.M. to noon.

Dresses that were both beautiful and sustainably created dazzled visitors to last year’s Fashion Experience

Two important notes for Friends Members

First Be sure to bring your membership card with you when you visit the Domes. This will allow you and others behind you to enter quickly and efficiently. It also enables you to take advantage of other benefits of membership, like the gift shop discount.

Second AAA will no longer offer a discount for new memberships to the Friends of the Domes.

www.milwaukeedomes.org

A Different Sort of Spring Flower

By Marian French
Horticulturist—Desert Dome

Walk through the Desert Dome and you will spot two different agave plants that have taken that final, bold step and gone to flower. One of them, a Queen Agave (Agave victoriae-reginae) sent up its flowering stalk early in the summer of 2013; it was a simple column of little white flowers. Promptly after these blooms faded, the lower leaves of the plant began to turn black. The mortal change traveled upwards until all parts of the plant were dry and dead.

Our next agave to mature is still very lively, and, depending on many factors, may still be in full bloom in March or even April. The flower stalk started forming in late November when it looked much like a huge stalk of asparagus. As winter progressed, the stalk grew taller by the day until distinct branches began to form at the top. By mid-January it was full of plump flower buds. As of press time, a small bunch of flowers was starting to open (see close-up photo, above right).

Interestingly, our star of the show was originally a big mystery, lacking any records or labels. Because so many agaves look very similar, and because this plant was out of its habitat and could have been from almost anywhere in the Americas, there were few clues to its identity. Once it flowered, the species of this unknown agave could be determined—Agave colorata! Of course, this excitement is bittersweet, because this plant, like the Queen Agave before it, will end up slowly dying through the summer, ending up a brown husk of its former self.

Such is the fate of almost every agave. Throughout their lives, these plants preserve their water and energy, never blooming until they reach a mature age of approximately 20 years. This one event takes everything out of the plant, and so it perishes. Hopefully, our Agave colorata will leave behind hundreds of seeds and little plants called pups or hijos (meaning “sons” in Spanish) growing from the same roots. Look for the pups of the Queen Agave that we have planted right next to where she was growing.

In total, there are 208 species of Agave plants. Most are native to Mexico, but they are also found in parts of southern and western United States and central and tropical South America. Aztec and other native groups used Agave to thatch their homes; to make thread, paper, and rope; and for food. They cooked the roots, ate the flowers and the stalks, and fermented the juice of the leaves. In case you are wondering, the Agave colorata that is about to bloom is not the variety used to make tequila, but the Domes does have an Agave tepaneki if you are curious to see one! They also made pins and needles from the thorns. After studying the Aztecs’ wide variety of uses for the agave plant, William H. Prescott wrote in 1843, “Surely, never did nature enclose in so compact a form so many of the elements of human comfort and civilization!”

We know it’s a little sad, but don’t worry. There are many other varieties of Agave in the desert dome. Once our Agave colorata dies, we will have a wonderful opportunity to bring new varieties of plants to our collection. Visit the Desert Dome in March or April to see this rare bloom in person!

The Festival features kids’ activities, live demonstrations, and opportunities to meet CSA farmers and other sustainability advocates

Those who participate in the clean-up receive a booklet of coupons which includes a buy-one-get-one-free admission coupon to The Domes.

When: Saturday, April 18, 2015 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
Cost: Free to Friends Members; Regular Domes admission prices for non-members

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Discover Everything You Need to Build a Magical Fairy Garden at the Domes’ Gift Shop

Very Fairy Princess Day has been known to bring out the whimsy in visitors young and old. Bring some of the fun home by creating your very own fairy garden, indoors or out!

A special note of thanks!

The staff of the Domes and Friends Board members want to extend a special note of thanks to Bernice who has been working in the Domes gift shop for over 15 years! We wish her a speedy recovery and hope to see her smiling face back at the Conservatory with the return of beautiful weather!

Save the Date: Dare to Be Aware—Holistic Health Fair

Dare to be Aware returns to the Domes on Sunday, March 22nd from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. This holistic health fair is a gathering of 100 exhibitors focused on expanding well-being and personal growth. Free workshops, demonstrations, and performances all make this event a unique and educational way to expand your knowledge with holistic and alternative ways to stay healthy and positive!

Other presentation topics include the healing power of sound, creating joy, crystal healing, energizing the higher brain through gentle touch, excitement and fear, the effects of stress, consciousness as a guide to discovering one’s potential, evolutionary spirituality, and communication with animals.

Vendor demonstrations and displays at the fair include massage, chiropractic, Reiki, essential oils and bath products, nutrition, life-coaching, and much, much more!

When: Sunday, March 22, 2015 from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Cost: Free to Friends Members; Regular Domes admission prices for non-members

Who’s vacationing at the Domes this winter?

By Sandy Folaron

Did you know that the Domes have our very own snowbirds? Plants from other parks in the system move into the Domes for the winter! Just like our lucky friends who are heading to Florida or the Caribbean, some lucky tropical plants from Boerner Botanical Gardens take a much needed winter retreat to escape from the Wisconsin cold weather and kick back at the new County Greenhouses here at the Domes!

Like any good snowbirds, we decided to share our warm weather vacation pictures with our Friends...

Conservatory Volunteer Orientation Sessions

For all Conservatory Opportunities

We are always looking for volunteers to assist with special fundraising events and for the education center. In addition to supporting the Friends, volunteers have the opportunity to learn more about the Domes and meet great people.

Length: One 3 hour session (includes breaks, refreshments and tour of Domes)
Dates: Wednesday, March 25th, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. OR Saturday, March 28th, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Registration is required. Please contact Liz Fehring at volunteer@milwaukeedomes.org
Co-facilitators: Liz Fehring [FOD Volunteer Coordinator] and Paula Zamiatowski [Conservatory Interpretive Educator]

For Education Center Volunteers

Volunteers who have already attended a Volunteer Training Session are invited to attend this Education Center Volunteer training session. We are looking for volunteers for the following positions: Greeter for Monday mornings (9:00 to noon); Leaders for Monday morning story time (ages 3-8) (9:45 to 10:45); Hosts for Green Living Festival, April 18; Phenologists to record seasonal plant activity (schedule can be set up with the Conservatory Interpretive Educator).

When: Tuesday, March 31st
Length: One 3 hour session (includes breaks, refreshments and tour of Domes)
Dates: Wednesday, October 15, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Registration is required. Please contact Paula Zamiatowski at paula.zamiatowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Facilitated by Paula Zamiatowski [Conservatory Interpretive Educator]
By Paula Zamiatowski
Interpretive Educator
No need for fancy landscaping or special tools when it comes to growing food. All you really need is a special watering can.

Plants marked with an * asterisk grow well in containers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Type</th>
<th>March Sow seeds indoors only</th>
<th>April Sow seeds indoors or outdoors</th>
<th>May 15 Sow seeds outdoors or move plants outdoors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bean, pole/bush/lima *</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Beet *</td>
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<td>Broccoli</td>
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<td>Brussels Sprout</td>
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<td>Cabbage (early)</td>
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<td>Carrot *</td>
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<td>Cauliflower</td>
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<td>Celery</td>
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<td>Chard *</td>
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<td>Collards</td>
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<td>Cucumber *</td>
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<td>Greens *</td>
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<td>Herbs *</td>
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<td>Kale</td>
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<td>Kohlrabi</td>
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<td>Lettuce, leaf *</td>
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<td>Mustard</td>
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<td>Okra</td>
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<td>Onions, sets *</td>
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<td>Parsley</td>
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<td>Parsnip</td>
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<td>Pepper *</td>
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<td>Pumpkin</td>
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<td>Radish *</td>
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<td>Rutabaga</td>
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<td>Spinach *</td>
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<td>Squash (summer)</td>
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<td>Squash (fall)</td>
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<td>Tomato *</td>
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<td>Turnip</td>
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<td>Watermelon</td>
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From the Friends of the Domes

By Phil Rozga
Acting President

The year is off to a great start for us at the Domes. The ethnic festivals have been very well attended and the Winter Farmer’s Market is finally in its new and permanent home. The Domes was temporarily hosting the Winter Farmer’s market until the Greenhouses received their occupancy permits. While many vendors and customers enjoyed attending the market in the Domes, we lost a great deal of revenue due to the free attendance during market hours. The admission revenue from winter weekend visitors is vital to the Domes financial health. Hosting the market also meant that many of our ethnic festivals had to be cancelled last year because we did not have space for both the festivals and the market. If you have not made it to the Farmer’s Market yet, you have until April 11th to attend this free event and load up on fresh vegetables, honey, organic meats, and other local specialties.

Speaking of doing something good, have you contributed to our Capital Fund Campaign? We are counting on your support. We are just starting to reach out to the local business community for their support as well. If you know of a business that might be interested in making a contribution, please contact Sally Sullivan at the Friends of the Domes Office. The phone number is (414) 257-5608.

The Domes has been invited to participate in Weather Day at Miller Park again this year. Weather Day provides school-age students an opportunity to learn about ecosystems. About 8,000 students and teachers from Southwest Wisconsin will attend the event on April 24th before a regular Brewers baseball game. TMJ Storm Team 4 conducts the program, providing weather information in an entertaining manner. Friends board members and volunteers bring more than 60 plants to build mini ecosystems. Teachers and students experience and compare how two different ecosystems feel, smell, and look. This year Paula Zamiatowski, our Interpretive Educator, has added a demonstration on how greenhouse gases can heat up the planet. Look for us on the TMJ4 news! The snow will melt. The cold will go away. Hope for a beautiful Spring.